

# Tips for Handling Conflict in the Classroom...

Your own behavior teaches children as much as the rules do!



**Have a few rules and stick to them.** Each rule and the reason behind it should be clearly and simply stated – as well as the consequences for breaking a rule.

**Simply insist.** Develop a word or tone in your voice that clearly communicates to a child that this is not negotiable.

**Don't get into long-winded discussions and negotiations.** Young children won't always be able to follow your logic and they may lose the connection between their behavior and the consequences you enforce.

**Target the behavior, not the child.** For example, "I really don't like when you toss sand around," not "What a horrible child you are for throwing sand."

**Use natural and logical consequences.**

Consequences should teach children what they did wrong, suggest good behavior, and include righting the wrong.

**Use positive statements that suggest positive actions.**

Instead of "If you don't wash your hands, you can't eat lunch," say "You can eat as soon as you wash your hands."

**Accept the child's feelings, but teach better behavior.** "I know you are very angry, but I cannot allow you to hit another child."

**Be specific.** Instead of "Clean this room," say "Please pick up the books and put them on the shelf."

**Tackle one problem at a time.** If a child is throwing a tantrum and refusing to pick up toys, deal first with the tantrum, then with picking up toys.

**Learn to ignore some annoying behavior.** If it isn't destructive or disruptive, let it go.

**Keep your cool.** Your anger only adds fuel to the fire and changes the focus from the behavior of the child to your anger. This prevents you from being in control.

*Adapted from "Choosing Non Violence," the Rainbow House Handbook to a Violence-Free Future for Young Children*